



9-26-1854

Letter from John W. H. Baker to Julia Ann Baker, 1854 Sept. 26

John W. H. Baker

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Recommended Citation

Baker, John W. H., "Letter from John W. H. Baker to Julia Ann Baker, 1854 Sept. 26" (1854). *Gold Rush Life*. 87.

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Mokelumne Hill, Sept. 26th, 1854

My Dear Wife

I recieved your very welcome letter of Aug. 15 & 16th last evening and was very much relieved of my anxiety on account of not recieving it before. a portion of the mail was due and recieved here almost a week since, but myself and quite a number of other Eastern men recieved no letters, and judged that the Post Offices below had not done their duty in regard to forwarding the mails--and to make the whole matter correct, last evening the remainder of the mail arrived after having been sent into the Northern part of the State to Marysville. There is nothing which makes me more happy and contented than to hear that you, my dear wife, and my beloved children are well. I seem to feel new courage when my semi-monthly letter arrives and with it the news that you are all enjoying yourselves as well as possible considering my absence. I suppose you as well as myself will feel somewhat discouraged to the loss which I met with at the time of the fire. But it is not well to look back to losses but while I remain here I am looking forward for gain--and, as I told you in a previous letter I have located myself in such a manner as that I shall not be liable to loose my property again as I lost it before, as I have invested nothing in real estate. I am now well established in our new quarters and doing about the same amount of business as ever. Our business is good and I have the same intention as ever of continuing in business in California untill I can obtain a sufficient amount to locate myself comfortably in some Eastern village. I still think I shall be able to return as soon as the farthest time I have ever set if not before (which is one year from next Spring)

Our town is making rapid progress in its recovery from the effects of the fire, and is looking quite busy. our streets are thronged with teams loaded with merchandise, lumber, stone, lime &c &c and the noise of the carpenters' hammers and those of the stone masons

are the continuous music of the whole day. We have a fireproof stone building just completed adjoining our building which adds considerable to the safety of our establishment. Our building is a very nice one for California and is the best looking one on the hill of the kind. We have furnished it in good shape and intend to keep a better variety of medicines and fancy articles than we ever had before. We have it beautifully lighted with a camphene hanging lamp in the centre of the room which gives the whole a very fine and pleasant offset in the evening. Upon the whole I am much better situated than I was before the fire, aside from the consideration of having as much money. But never mind I will soon scratch up a little more. My health never was better and I feel as though I should be able to make a good thing of my next year's work in this country. I have written no letters to my friends recently from the fact that whenever I felt like doing anything I had an abundance in our shop to do. I have yet considerable to do to get our things all right. Dr. H. has done but very little in compounding our medicines, and I even now feel as though I may have done wrong in remaining with him, but while I am doing well perhaps, I should let well enough alone. I am confident that if I had gone to Jackson I should have done far better than I am doing here. But if I had gone there, I should have been obliged to have invested all my surplus capital, and should have run greater risk of fire. However I shall try it a few months and if I do not succeed to my mind, I shall leave-- I am sorry to hear that my old friend Mr. Minniman is dead. But that he should die is no more than we might expect he was getting old and disease had made great inroad upon his constitution years ago. Give Dorinda my sympathy for her affliction and tell her not to mourn like one who has no comfort for such a loss must of necessity come sooner or later. Give the boys my kind regards and my best wishes for their prosperity. I was surprised to hear of the death of George Scales. I think the

family will take the manner of his death as a severe dispensation, as all such deaths I think are much more unreconcilable than those which come of lingering sickness. You speak of Mr. Wood in you letter. I have frequently wished he could be here at the time of flowers or even that he might spend one year in the State and study its botanical and geological characters. I am convinced he would enjoy it beyond measure, aside from its usefullness to the multitude of people who need a work of the kind which he might write to enlighten them upon the great lesson which the peculiarities of the country would teach them.

In your last you give me the amount of money which you have on hand, as 65\$ and Steven's note of 75\$ making 140\$. I suppose you have deposited the \$300 which you recieved last by that, and the \$15 for the children.

By this mail I send you a draft on Adams & Co for \$500 which I desire you should take 100\$ from if you need it, and the remainder deposit as before in the bank. When I shall send another draft is very uncertain. I may not for 6 months but if you need to draw on the amount deposited before you recieve more from me do so in such amount as you want. Tell Sis that I have recieved her baby all nice and well and think she is quite expert in the use of shears. I am very well satisfied with the love which Fred sends but should like a letter a "leettle better. I rejoice to know that Jane is recovering. Tell H. I will think of the proposition for building. But the most I fear is that all the places will be occupied before I have the change and chance. Perhaps some of the fine places will be for sale by the time I return. I will write a few lines by Mail, this goes by Express.

Mrs. Julian Ann Baker
Meriden, N. H.

Yours Respectfully
John W. H. Baker